

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 244534

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DRAFTED BY: COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/WHAIMES

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STATE/EB/CBA/OCA/BR I A WILLIAMSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

UNCLAS STATE 244534

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, BEXP, BMEP, NI

SUBJECT: MEPD OFFICER VISIT

FOR MCGRATH

REF: A) LAGOS 10130 B) STATE 238633

1. WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY MEPD OBJECTIVES FOR PROJECT OFFICER TRIP TO NIGERIA IN ORDER TO ASSURE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR EMBASSY AS WELL AS MEPD. WE ARE MOST ANXIOUS TO WORK WITH EMBASSY STAFF TO COORDINATE USG EFFORTS TOWARD INCREASING THE US SHARE OF EXPORT SALES RELATED TO NIGERIAN MAJOR PROJECTS, WHICH IS INDEED THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THIS TRIP.

2. MEPD OPERATES UNDER THE RATIONALE THAT PRESENCE OF US ENGINEERING DESIGNERS IN DRAWING SPECIFICATIONS AND IN ASSISTANCE ON PROCUREMENT OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT ENHANCES THE POSSIBILITY OF US OF THAT EQUIPMENT. MEPD DEALS WITH PROJECTS REQUIRING ENGINEERING AND SYSTEMS INSTALLATION,
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PAGE 02 STATE 244534

AND ASSISTS U.S. FIRMS SEEKING CONTRACTS FOR DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION,

PROJECT MANAGEMENT, TURNKEY CONSTRUCTION, AND THE SUPPLY OF MAJOR ENGINEERED PACKAGES. WE ARE NOT DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH "CHANNELS FOR SUPPLY OF US EQUIPMENT," AS MENTIONED PARA 2 REFTL, AND SCHEDULE FOR PROJECT OFFICER SHOULD NOT INCLUDE MEETINGS WITH US SUPPLIERS OF EQUIPMENT.

3. MEPD DOES ACT AS FOCAL POINT FOR COORDINATING GOVERNMENT-WIDE ASSISTANCE TO QUALIFIED U.S. FIRMS BIDDING FOR SUCH CONTRACTS. WHILE WE ROUTINELY INFORM APPROPRIATE COMPANIES OF MAJOR PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES AS REPORTED BY OUR POSTS, WE DO NOT GENERALLY PROMOTE PROJECTS IN THE U.S.- WE BECOME ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN A CASE ONLY ON SPECIFIC REQUEST OF A US COMPANY, THE FOREIGN SERVICE, A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT, OR WHEN WE FEEL A PARTICULAR SITUATION WARRANTS SPECIAL ATTENTION.

4. IN THE CASE OF NIGERIA, THE SUBSTANTIAL US BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT, THE POOR TRACK RECORD OF US COMPANIES SEEKING MAJOR PROJECT CONTRACTS, AND THE COMPLEX BUSINESS CONDITIONS DO INDEED WARRANT SPECIAL ATTENTION. WHILE WE HAVE THE LONG-RANGE GOAL OF ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT TO THE BENEFIT OF U.S. FIRMS, OUR IMMEDIATE GOAL IS TO DIRECTLY INFLUENCE SPECIFIC PROJECTS WHERE U.S. FIRMS ARE OR CAN POTENTIALLY BECOME INVOLVED.

5. THEREFORE, AN IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT OFFICER VISIT WILL BE TO DEVISE PLAN OF ACTION WITH EMBASSY ON CURRENT AND UPCOMING PROJECTS, AND TO TAKE ACTION DURING VISIT ON THESE PROJECTS. IT IS OUR INTENTION THAT HAIMES AND EMBASSY SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS PROJECTS WHICH SHE HAS BEEN FOLLOWING (SEE REF B), IN ORDER TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR USG INITIATIVES WITH RESPECT TO THOSE PROJECTS. AS AN EXAMPLE OF SUCH INITIATIVES, EMBASSY MAY WISH TO REFER TO ATKINS/MCGRATH LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 28, 1973.

6. WE THUS HAVE IN MIND THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES 1) TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EMBASSY AND MEPD ON MAJOR PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES 2) TO COORDINATE MEPD EFFORTS WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 244534

EMBASSY EFFORTS 3) FOR PROJECT OFFICER TO GAIN FIRST-HAND INFORMATION ON UPCOMING PROJECTS SO THAT MEPD CAN INFORM AND WORK WITH APPROPRIATE U.S. FIRMS 4) TO BRING EMBASSY UP-TO-DATE ON MEPD CAPABILITIES AND U.S. INDUSTRY SITUATION. 5) TO IDENTIFY NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES IN ORDER TO CONCENTRATE USG EFFORTS ON THOSE PRIORITIES 6) TO DETERMINE THOSE PROJECTS WHERE MEPD/EMBASSY EFFORTS MAY BEST BE DIRECTED 7) TO DEVISE SPECIFIC PLAN OF ACTION FOR CURRENT

OPPORTUNITIES, PARTICULARLY FOR LNG PROJECT, GAS UTILIZATION, PETROLEUM AND PETROCHEMICAL PROJECTS. 1) TO OVERALL BUSINESS CONDITIONS TO THE BENEFIT OF U.S. COMPANIES.

6. IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH OBJECTIVES AS PER ABOVE, WE AGREE THAT EXTENSIVE IN-HOUSE WORK WILL BE NECESSARY. HOWEVER, WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT MEETINGS WITH APPROPRIATE FMG OFFICIALS IS ESSENTIAL. AS PER REF A, WOULD APPRECIATE ANYTHING EMBASSY CAN DO TO SET UP MEETING WITH OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR LNG PROJECT AND OTHER MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AT HIGHEST LEVEL (WITH EMBASSY ACCOMPANIMENT) AS WELL AS WITH COMPARABLE OFFICIALS IN MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIES AND MINISTRY OF FINANCE ETC., AS EMBASSY ADVISES.

7. UNLESS EMBASSY STRONGLY ADVISES, DO NOT THINK TRAVEL TO PORT HARCOURT OR WARRI ESSENTIAL. INGERSOLL

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